



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Gresham grade school teacher charged with possessing child pornography

PORTLAND, Ore. — A counselor and teacher with the Reynolds School District appeared in federal court here this afternoon to answer charges of possessing and receiving child pornography over the Internet, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Gresham Police Department (GPD).

William Knudsen, 64, was taken into custody yesterday afternoon by ICE agents and GPD detectives after turning himself in at the Gresham Police Department. An arrest warrant was issued for Knudsen based on a criminal complaint filed by ICE.

Prior to his resignation this week, Knudsen was employed at Troutdale Elementary School in Gresham, where he worked as both a teacher and student counselor for the last 15 years.

According to the affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, the investigation into Knudsen began after ICE received a tip that there appeared to be child pornography on Knudsen's computer. Based on that lead, ICE agents, with assistance from the GPD, conducted a consensual search of Knudsen's home. There investigators recovered more than 1,000 videotapes, compact disks, DVDs and external hard drives, as well as binders containing images of prepubescent minors engaged illicit sexual conduct. Knudsen admitted to downloading the child pornography over the Internet and told agents that the majority of the child pornography he received came from Russian child pornography websites and through UseNet groups to which he subscribed.

"Those who engage in the sexual exploitation of children should no longer expect the anonymity of cyberspace to protect them," said Leigh Winchell, special agent in charge for the ICE office of investigations in Seattle. "ICE is committed to working with our law enforcement partners to identify, investigate and remove sexual predators from our communities."

Anyone with information related to this investigation is encouraged to call the GPD hotline at 503-618-2719 or 1-888-989-3505.

This case is scheduled for a preliminary hearing on Wednesday, July 12, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. If convicted of the allegations, Knudsen faces a minimum sentence of five years and a maximum \$250,000 fine.

Knudsen's arrest is part of Operation Predator, an ongoing ICE enforcement initiative launched in 2003 to identify, investigate, arrest and, in the case of foreign nationals, deport child sex predators. Overall, the initiative has resulted in more than 8,200 arrests nationwide, including more than 220 in Oregon.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline. The number, 1-866-DHS-2ICE, is monitored 24 hours a day. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for the enforcement of border, economic, infrastructure and transportation security laws. ICE seeks to prevent acts of terrorism by targeting the people, money and materials that support terrorist and criminal activities.